

ST. MARTIN'S MONTHLY

July 2016

50p



Deuteronomy

8:3

Matthew 4:4

Bread is not enough to keep us alive;
we need to feed on every word of God

St Martin's Church, Hale Gardens, London W3 9SQ

(Registered charity no. 1132976)

www.stmartinswestacton.co.uk

Email: stmartins@stmartinswestacton.com

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Permission to Officiate	The Rev'd Robert Pearson
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Magazine Editor	Clive Davis (clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com)

The Vicar is available for consultation and enquiries by appointment.
Please ring the Parish Office.

Articles for the next month's magazine should be sent to
Clive Davis (email: clive.a.g.davis@btinternet.com)

They should reach the Editor by 17th July.

The August magazine will be on sale by 30th July.

A brighter day is dawning?



During the campaign I deliberately avoided any public statements on the European referendum that might have been associated with St Martin's from the pulpit or otherwise. This was a policy designed to ensure strict neutrality and to allow people to make up their own minds on 23rd June. In any case no-one could argue that the public were in any way short of information on the subject as facts and opinions have bombarded us

from all sides.

Nevertheless, this has been one of the most important decisions for at least a generation. Interestingly, I am writing this article before the referendum has taken place and consequently I haven't at this stage got a clue (and nor has anyone else) as to which way it will turn out.

However, given the importance of the decision some will say that the Church should have given a steer, whilst others would say that the Church should keep out of politics at all costs. In this respect it is interesting to note that both the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Archbishop of York went public with their opinions. On 12th June Justin Welby, indicating that he would vote to remain, issued a measured statement, the essence of which was contained in the sentence, "To be a country for the world is part of the calling of being British. Economics are massively important, so is migration, but they are not everything, although they are the signs of the values we have." Also, the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu gave us, "Our commitments to our European partners cannot be lightly cast aside – that's why I'll be voting to remain."

We are in a curious position in England at least inasmuch as the Church of England is the 'Established Church', has twenty four Bishops in the House of Lords and even today in a pluralistic and multi-cultural country it wields an influence through its parishes and clergy in every part of the land. This represents what might be termed 'soft power' and it should be used carefully. This is why Christians should always get back to scripture as the essence of our message. It is the same message that Jesus used of himself and it has its origins in the Old Testament. In Luke 4 v 18 Jesus says of himself in messianic tones, "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to

proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free". This is an almost direct quotation from Isaiah Chapter 61 v 1, so its pedigree is exemplary.

A wise old priest said to me, reflecting on the referendum, that the problem is that in our modern society we have mostly lost the idea that we are accountable to a God whose will it is that we love one another - we have replaced this with a self-centred creed of 'what is good for me'. On the contrary the Church and Christians can never be entirely detached from what is going on around us, which in turn was why I read out this article and the Archbishop of Canterbury's reflections during my sermons on the Sunday before the referendum.

Nicholas



Christian Aid Week

St Martin's raised £385 for Christian Aid. Thanks to all those who supported the important work of Christian Aid.

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FIVE FAMOUS PRAYERS –

3. DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
Forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
In purer lives Thy service find,
In deeper reverence, praise.

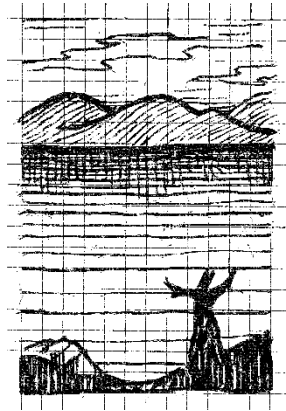
In simple trust like theirs who heard
Beside the Syrian sea
The gracious calling of the Lord,
Let us, like them, without a word,
Rise up and follow Thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,
Where Jesus knelt to share with Thee
The silence of eternity
Interpreted by love!

With that deep hush subduing all
Our words and works that drown
The tender whisper of Thy call,
As noiseless let Thy blessing fall
As fell Thy manna down.

Drop Thy still dews of quietness,
Till all our strivings cease;
Take from our souls the strain and stress,
And let our ordered lives confess
The beauty of Thy peace.

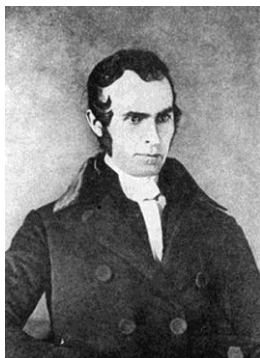
Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and Thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!



Context/History

John Greenleaf Whittier was born on a farm in rural Massachusetts

in 1807. There was only enough money to get by. Whittier himself was not cut out for hard farm labour and suffered from bad health and physical frailty his whole life. Although he received little formal education, he was an avid reader who studied his father's six books on Quakerism until their teachings became the foundation of his ideology, particularly its stress on humanitarianism, compassion, and social responsibility.



He was first introduced to poetry by a teacher. To raise money to attend school, Whittier became a shoemaker for a time, and a deal was made to pay part of his tuition with food from the family farm. He completed a high school education in only two terms.

Whittier became an out-spoken critic of President Andrew Jackson, and by 1830 was editor of the prominent *New England Weekly Review* in Hartford, Connecticut, the most influential Whig journal in New England.

In 1833, he published the antislavery pamphlet *Justice and Expediency*, and from there dedicated the next twenty years of his life to the abolitionist cause. The controversial pamphlet destroyed all of his political hopes—as his demand for immediate emancipation alienated both northern businessmen and southern slaveholders—but it also sealed his commitment to a cause that he deemed morally correct and socially necessary. He was a founding member of the American Anti-Slavery Society and signed the Anti-Slavery Declaration of 1833, which he often considered the most significant action of his life. Whittier's political skill made him useful as a lobbyist, and his willingness to badger anti-slavery congressional leaders into joining the abolitionist cause was invaluable.

In 1845, he began writing his essay "The Black Man" which included an anecdote about John Fountain, a free black who was jailed in Virginia for helping slaves escape. After his release, Fountain went on a speaking tour and thanked Whittier for writing his story.

Around this time, the stresses of editorial duties, worsening health, and dangerous mob violence caused him to have a physical breakdown. Whittier went home to Amesbury, and remained there for the rest of his life, ending his *active* participation in abolition. Being confined to his home and away from the action offered Whittier a chance to write better abolitionist poetry; he was even poet laureate for his party. Whittier's poems often used slavery to symbolize all kinds of oppression (physical, spiritual, economic), and his poems

stirred up popular response because they appealed to feelings rather than logic. Whittier produced two collections of antislavery poetry. The passage of the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 ended both slavery and his public cause, so Whittier turned to other forms of poetry for the remainder of his life.

Dear Lord and Father of Mankind is part of a longer poem called *The Brewing of Soma* and was written in 1872. The storyline is of Vedic priests brewing and drinking Soma in an attempt to experience divinity. It describes the whole population getting drunk on Soma. It compares this to some Christians' use of "*music, incense, vigils drear, And trance, to bring the skies more near, Or lift men up to heaven!*" But all in vain—it is mere intoxication. Whittier ends by describing the true method for contact with the divine, as practiced by Quakers: Sober lives dedicated to doing God's will, seeking silence and selflessness in order to hear the "*still, small voice*" described in I Kings 19:11-13 as the authentic voice of God, rather than earthquake, wind or fire.

Meditations and Questions

Whittier worked hard for the abolition of slavery, as an intrinsic aspect of his faith. What are the causes of the present day that we need to be involved in as Christians?

When we know more about the origin of this popular hymn, it might seem a strange choice for a church like ours, who make so much use of liturgy and music in our worship. What is meant in this context, by the word "sober"? Is it necessary to be "sober" to live a life dedicated to God's will?

What in our lives can get in the way and prevent us growing nearer to God? What might be "*Our words and works that drown/ The tender whisper of Thy call*"?

How may we make contact with the divine through liturgy, music and incense? Are there times when they might get in the way?

Do we spend enough time in silence before God – in church or in our own lives?

Prayer suggestions

As a Quaker, for Whittier "*the still small voice of calm*" reflects his Quaker use of silence in worship. Sit somewhere in silence for five minutes every day for a week.



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Who do you say I am?

Explorations into Christianity

15th September

The Rev'd Rob Pearson, Resident Priest at St Martin's asks:
How should the church represent Christ to the world in the
21st century, with especial reference to the Church of England
and the wider Anglican Communion?

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Baptisms last month

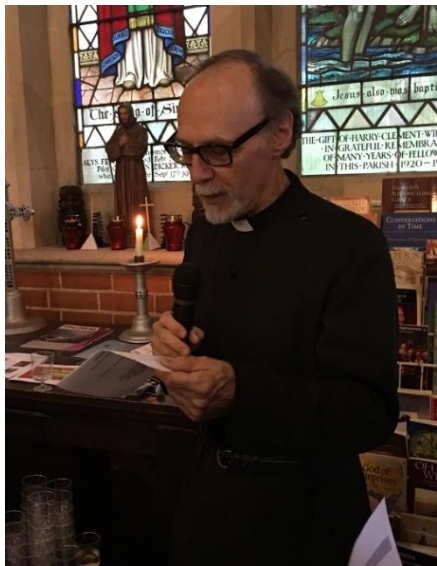


Jemima Alice Collins was baptised at the All-Age service on Sunday 12th June. Pictured here with her parents Rachel and Jonathan, godparents Anna, Ann and Daniel and members of the two families.



Baptised on Sunday 12th June in St Martin's. Max Alexander Saunders Finn with his parents Kara (herself baptised by the Vicar thirty years ago) and Jan-Vincent his father and godparents Luca and Oliver.

Celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday



On the Queen's official birthday last month we celebrated with cake and a toast to Her Majesty.

Here the Vicar proposes the toast honouring the Queen's 90th birthday.

Pictured on the right is Camilla cutting the cake she made for the occasion.

Everyone enjoyed the cake and toasting the Queen.



Autumn events

Our Harvest Festival

On Sunday 2nd October at 10am

Our Confirmation Service

The Confirmation Service will take place on
Sunday 16th October at 10am.

The adult preparation course will start in September

There will be a course of 5 sessions

If you would like to be Confirmed
please contact the Parish Office.



The Wedding of Danny and Nicola



Danny van Vliet and Nicola Kelly were married in St Martin's on Saturday 28th May. They are pictured here in the churchyard with the vicar.

Thank you

St Martin's supports the work of different charities during the year. The following extracts are from recent 'thank-you' letters from two charities we have recently support.



"I am writing to express our deepest thanks to St Martin's Church for the recent kind gift of £250. As the Fundraising Officer, I am grateful for your donation. This year we at Practical Action

are celebrating our 50th anniversary of helping to change lives for the better in some of the poorest communities around the world. Our innovative projects include shelters to protect precious alpaca herds in Peru and lighting homes powered by gas extracted from manure."



"on behalf of The Mission to Seafarers I would like to thank you and everyone involved at St Martin's Church for the generous donation of £400. The Mission to Seafarers works 365 days a year in 250 ports worldwide to support Seafarers and to give specialist help in a crisis.

Your donation will be used to further our work in offering practical help and spiritual support to those who work at sea."



June Wheatland R.I.P



The funeral took place on Tuesday 24th May of June Wheatland.

June has been a very longstanding member of St Martin's although over the past decade ill health prevented her attending.

Our thoughts are with Vicky Stiff, her daughter, and Rebecca (married in St Martin's in 2015) and James her grandchildren.

From a former parishioner...

Dear St Martins

Next Saturday my husband, Philip Duncan Rex and I will be celebrating our Golden Wedding Anniversary. My goodness 50 years goes so quickly!

We were married at St Martins on June 25th 1966 and the officiating Vicar was the Rev George Yeulett, who lived in Birch Grove, (the same road as my parents, myself and my two brothers), from where I got married. Like this week's weather, it was not exactly flaming June, but although there was rain and dark clouds on the day, these opened into glorious sunshine as we came out of the church. My late father, (who was in a wheelchair as the result of a second world war plane crash), gave me away and the width of the aisle was only just able to accommodate his wheelchair and my wedding dress! The vicar was just so kind and witty and we felt surrounded by love. Occasionally over the years we have visited St Martins and recalled so many happy memories of that day.

We have lived in Kent ever since and have been blessed by two wonderful sons, Anthony and Stephen and now three lovely grandchildren, (Hugo, India and Xanthe). We were just wondering if you could possibly include us all in your prayer list for next Sunday. We would really appreciate it.

Many thanks and Best wishes
Anne (Anne Rex nee Ratcliffe)



Japanese Anglican Church UK news

Pictured her with the vicar are Yuki Johnson, Commissioned Lay leader of the Japanese Anglican Church UK which meets in St Martin's every third Sunday, and the Rev'd Ikuko Williams priest and hospital chaplain in Leeds Hospital in the Diocese of Ripon and Leeds.

From last month....



Thanks to Lynne Armstrong for arranging a very nice **Poems and pints** evening held on Thursday 26th May in the Parish Room. The evening made around £100 for church funds. Also pictured is Anne Oughton with her lovely display of cakes for the evening.



Josephine Hart of the charity **Hope UK** which helps young people avoid drug and substance abuse spoke at the Parish Communion on Sunday 5th June. Josephine is pictured here with members of the congregation. St Martin's as is our custom presented a £200 cheque towards the charity. Hope UK have written to say *"thank you for the generous donation of £200 received after a presentation by our voluntary Drug Educator, Josephine Hart."*

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When the whistle blows, walk across.

Those were the orders soldiers were given in preparation for 'zero hour' on July 1st 1916. Running, history tells us, was forbidden. At 7.30am, whistles blew all along the trenches. Men scrambled out of the trenches. They were met with relentless and continuous machine-gun fire. By the end of that first day over 19,000 British soldiers had lost their lives and over 38,000 more were injured. It is the highest number of dead and injured suffered by the British Army in a single day. The battle continued for another 140 days. When the Battle of the Somme ended on 18th November 1916, the Allies had advanced five miles. Total men killed and injured from both sides during those 141 days was over one million. The Battle of the Somme was technically a series of many battles fought along the same lengthy front. The action between one battle and another was almost continuous; hence history records them as The Battles of the Somme. July 1916 saw five St Martin's parishioners on the front line.

Robert Forrester was born in 1895, the third child and only son of Scottish parents. By 1911 the family had moved to 43 King Edwards Gardens and Robert, now 15, was employed as an accountant's clerk. When war was declared, Robert enlisted with the West Yorkshire Regiment. In 1915 they were deployed to the Somme and Robert had attained the rank of Corporal and was in the 10th Battalion of the Regiment. Robert's father died in June 1916, though it is not clear if he had received this news before being deployed to the trenches.

The Battalion War Diary records that on 28th June they were in trenches moving to battle positions on the 30th. The entry for 1st July was short and reads: "*At 7.30am the Battalion took part in the grand assault. Orders attached. The Battalion assaulted in 4 lines. 2 lines got through the German position and were cut off, the attack on our left failed. Casualties were very heavy chiefly caused by machine guns which enfiladed our left flank and were so deadly that our 3rd and 4th lines failed to get across no-man's-land. Approximately 27 officers and 750 other ranks were killed.*"

The "Orders attached" gave the objectives of the assault. There was a village just within the German front line, Fricourt Village. The Orders were: "*Objective: Clearing up to the Eastern edge of Fricourt Village from Well Lane to Cottage and from Cottage to Willow Avenue. On reaching this objective the battalion will reorganize with objective of clearing Fricourt Wood.*" The first objective wasn't met until the next

day by another battalion. Corporal Robert Nicol Forrester, aged 21, was killed in action on 1st July 1916. He is buried in the Fricourt New Military Cemetery.

Further along the front was **William Kettle**. William was baptised in March 1887 in Barbourne, Worcester. The family soon moved to The Cape Colony (part of modern-day South Africa). By 1908 they had returned to England, living in Acton and William had one younger sister and two brothers. By 1911 they were living at 10 Lynton Road and William was a salesman in soft goods. He enlisted in August 1914, joining the London Regiment (Queen Victoria's Rifles).

The early summer of 1916 found William Kettle on the Western Front. The Regiment's War Diary shows that from 16th June 1916 they were preparing for battles. The diary goes on:

" June 23 to June 26. Attack practices. Trench digging. Fatigues.

June 27. Battalion marched from Halloy to billets at St Amand.

June 28 to June 30. Battalion in Reserve."

The next seven pages list the battle orders. The battle orders show 6 phases were planned, listing the Advance Formation, the objectives for each company in the battalion, which groups would carry Lewis guns and which would be stretcher bearers. The Orders lists the colour armbands each unit would be wearing for identification. For example, wire cutters would be wearing white armbands, whereas signallers would wear blue & white armbands. The Orders were quite detailed, down to making sure the "Battle Police" knew where to send each company and to see that any "stragglers" were sent to their companies. There is even a list of the equipment each section would carry. For example "Group A" would carry 35 large wire-cutters, 15 small wire-cutters, 90 wire breakers, 10 billhooks, 140 vigilant periscopes, 3 box periscopes, 500 sandbags, 360 grenades, 40 shovels and 10 picks. The attack would start when smoke was fired. So the men knew which direction they should advance in the smoke, lines of "chloride of lime" would be laid in No Man's Land.

In the last week of June the Allies started an artillery bombardment on the German defences in the area lasting seven days. On July 1st thirteen divisions launched an offensive. Unfortunately the preliminary bombardment barely touched the German defences. The Allied forces were surprised by the fierce resistance they met and losses were later described as catastrophic.

The entry in the Queen Victoria's Rifles' War Diary reads:

"July 1 (St Amand) Hebuterne. Battalion left billets in St Amand 8pm – 9.3pm on June 30 and took up position in assembly trenches, Y sector.

7.20am Smoke began (5 minutes too early).

7.30am Assault commenced. As soon as the assault commenced the German barrage was opened on to our trenches. It increased in intensity. By 9.48am the assaulting companies reached their objectives. However, they did not get in touch with the battalion on the right. At the same time the third company was consolidating the German 2nd line. The Germans pressed hard and the shortage of bombs was being felt.

According to the plans battle police were ordered to join the companies at 9.30am. Owing to congestion and communications they did not leave the trenches until after 10.30am. When they were able to leave the trenches they came under heavy machine gun fire and half the party immediately became casualties.

11am Shortage of bombs was critical.

12.30pm German counter attacks increased and our companies were driven back.

4.30pm Battalion ordered to hold.

7pm All survivors left in German trenches were now driven out and those who could get across no man's land rejoined the battalion.

Killed 56, Wounded 295, Missing 193."

William George Burnet Kettle, aged 30, was killed on July 1st. His body was never recovered from the battlefield and his name is inscribed on the Thiepval Memorial.

Nearby was **Walter Woodstock**, often called Percy by his parents. Walter, born in October 1886, was the eldest of three children. By 1901 the family were living at 11 Hillcrest Road, and Walter was at a boarding school in Bramley, Surrey. The 1911 census records that Walter was now an insurance clerk. He enlisted in 1915 with the York and Lancaster Regiment. The end of June found the Battalion in the trenches in Authuille Wood. The Battalion War Diary says:

"1916: July 1st. Being the leading Batln on the left of the Brigade in the attack near Ovillers the Batln assaulted as per Orders. The attack was timed for 7.30am and for an hour previous to that hour the guns delivered an intense bombardment to which the enemy replied. At the time the assault commenced our front trenches were heavily shelled but casualties were very few. No Smoke was liberated on our front line as the wind was unfavourable. The first wave left our trenches in

perfect order and to time and were at once met by an exceptionally heavy fire front and both flanks. Most of the men were killed or wounded but the remainder continued to advance. In spite of the heavy fire the remaining waves advanced to the attack but before getting halfway to the enemy trenches were mown down by the machine guns. About seventy men reached the enemy trenches some of these eventually reached the enemy's third line of his front system of trenches where they remained fighting for some time before all were killed or taken prisoner – one returned. The remainder were held up in the enemy front line and considerable fighting took place here until almost all were killed – only 3 returned. Many of the enemy were killed by our men both in his trenches and when he marched across the open to counter attack. The supporting Batln was also caught by the machine guns as they advanced to the attack and suffered so many casualties that only an odd man or two reached the German line where our men so badly needed support. The same happened to the Reserve Batln. Our Batln as it went over the parapet numbered 680 NCOs and men and 23 officers. Of these only 68 men returned. All the officers were casualties 18 being killed or missing and 5 wounded."

Lieutenant Walter Percy Woodstock was killed on July 1st, aged 29. His body was never recovered from the battlefield and his name is inscribed on the Thiepval Memorial.

The Battles continued and later in July **George Austin** also became one of 'The Fallen'. George, born in January 1895, was the youngest of four children. The family lived in Harlesden where their mother died in 1897. Within a year his father had remarried and the family had moved to Willesden.

It was in November 1909 that George enlisted into the Boy's Service with the Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry and was posted directly to the 1st Battalion at Gravesend. By April 1911 the rest of the family were living at 45 Fordhook Avenue. George was made a Private in 1913. By that time the 1st Battalion had moved to the Curragh in Ireland. Mobilization took place on 4th August 1914, and the Battalion embarked at Dublin on 13th August, landing at Le Havre two days later. From that date he appears to have taken part in all the major battles on the Western Front. George was awarded the Medal of St George, 4th class (a Russian decoration) "*for gallantry and distinguished service in the Field.*"

His battalion relieved troops on the Somme battlefield on 19th July

1916, in the area of Delville Wood. On 23rd July, the regiment took part in an abortive attack on High Wood. The following extract, is taken from the Regimental History: *The Duke of Cornwall's Light Infantry 1914-1919* by Everard Wyrall.

The Battles of the Somme (page 62):

"23rd July. The 13th Brigade attacked at 12.30am, but the attack was unsuccessful. At 3.40 a.m. the three companies of D.C.L.I., i.e. A, B and D Companies, assaulted three strong points. They were repulsed with heavy loss. Owing to the failure of the 13th Brigade the flanks of the Cornwalls were open and as they went forward both A and B Companies found themselves in a tight corner and machine-gun-fire caught them in rear and, their flanks being open, they had a terrible time. The remnants of the three companies fell back to their original positions where they hung on all day until relieved on the night of the 23rd by the 1st Divisions. They then returned to the trenches in Happy Valley. ... A large number of [men] killed, wounded and missing, were the casualties suffered in the attack of the 23rd July".

George Edward Austin was fatally wounded in this attack and died from his wounds on the 24th July 1916. He is buried in the Heilly



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Not too far away **Bernard Champness** also saw action. Bernard, born January 1889, was the youngest of three boys. The family were living in Edgware Road, Paddington and records show that Bernard started school on 11th April, 1893 at Campbell Street School. The school admissions register notes: *"Very delicate, certificate from doctor"*.

By 1911 Bernard and his parents were living in 27 Whitehall Gardens; one brother, now married, living at 23 Whitehall Gardens and the other brother, also married, living in Twyford Avenue. When war was declared Bernard was employed as a "Solicitor (Law Society's Scholar)". Bernard enlisted with the Artist's Rifles of the London Regiment around March 1915. At one point he was recommended for a Commission but owing to the rapidly unfolding events, he was transferred to the Kensington Battalion of the London Regiment. In April 1916, the battalion was deployed to Ireland and after the rebellion they were stationed at Cork, Ballincollig and Macroom on security duty. In May they boarded HMS Snowdon and moved to Fishguard. On 22nd June 1916 the battalion landed at Havre.

Reading the 13th Battalion diaries, the entry for 27th July has: *"Enemy quiet. Weather fine"*. However, I did unearth a report from a Major Young of the 13th Battalion in which he wrote: *"Kensington men had been sent to other battalions ... Other Territorials were attached to the Kensingtons ... This state of affairs was hardly conducive to esprit de corps, but fortunately the men behaved well"*. So it is unclear during which of these battles Bernard was killed. It was possibly either the battle at High Wood or at Delville Wood as both overlapped during July 1916. They are within walking distance of each other.

Bernard Champness was killed in action on 27th July 1916, aged 27. He was buried in the Ecoivres Military Cemetery at Mont-St Eloi.

100 years after their sacrifice:

We remember them.



STOP PRESS + STOP PRESS + STOP PRESS

Alice Hudson, the Head at Twyford High School, has been made a Dame in the birthday honours list, a very proud moment for her and Twyford School.

St Martin's, West Acton, London



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Usual Sunday Services

8am: Holy Communion

10am: Parish Communion

6.30pm: Evensong

Our Junior Church meets in the Church Hall at 10am
except when there is a Family Service.

The 'On-Message' Group meets every second Sunday of the month.
Over coffee the group discusses various issues for Christians.
The next meeting will be July 10th at 11.15am

Our Youth Group meets every Tuesday at 7pm
in the Parish Room (rear of Church Hall)

Japanese Anglican Church UK

meets every third Sunday of the month:

(except July, August and December)

3pm Bible Study and Evening Worship in Japanese

Every **Wednesday** at 25 Birch Grove, W3

11am: Informal Eucharist followed by the Coffee Club at 11.30am

You can now make a donation from your mobile phone.

For example to donate £5: text **STMA34 £5** to **70070**

You can donate any amount you wish.